

Minutes

Asheville City Council – Public Safety Committee April 20, 2010 - 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Fourth Floor Municipal Building Training Room

Present: Council Members: Councilmember Bill Russell, Chair; Vice Mayor Brownie Newman, Councilmember Cecil Bothwell
Staff: Jeff Richardson, Chief William Hogan, Chief Scott Burnette, Assistant Fire Chief David McFee, Phil Kleisler
Guests: Charlie Hume, Rob Sebrell, Ben Conway, Ryan Seymour

Approval of the Committee Minutes

- The committee by consensus approved the February 2010 minutes.

Asheville Police Department (APD): Quarterly Report

- Chief Hogan welcomed the group and highlighted the efforts the APD has made in the previous quarter. Included in this presentation (attached) was:
 - o The Madison County Sheriff's Department called APD to detonate 148 sticks of decaying dynamite and fertilizer.
 - o The APD held its 20th annual awards banquet to recognize and honor officers and employees who best exemplify professionalism and expertise in their fields.
 - o Nuisance Court was in session three times during the quarter, with 62 new cases on the calendar. As of March 25, participants have completed 1014.5 hours of community service in the city.
 - o Chief Hogan spoke on criminal investigations, including property and violent crime.
- Vice Mayor Newman then asked if the community service via Nuisance Court is deterring offenders. Chief Hogan replied that it is and spoke on the benefits the community is also receiving from the Court.
- The Committee then discussed drug seizures and how these they are properly disposed.

Asheville Fire Department (AFD): Quarterly Update

- Chief Burnette covered a variety of updates, including:
 - o The Givens Estate asked to partner with the AFD to conduct a training exercise that included burning vegetation over certain areas within their property.
 - o The AFD earned accredited agency status for five more years, making the agency one of only 138 accredited fire departments in the world.
 - o The renovation of fire station six is complete and there is already a 25% reduction in energy costs for the entire building.
 - o During the past quarter, the AFD responded to 3,690 emergency incidents, or about 41 emergency incidents per day. Also during the quarter, standards of cover percentages have dropped in most reportable areas due likely to inclement weather delaying the response times.

- There have been positive conversations occurring at the operational level for partnerships with both 1) AB Tech for a future fire and police station site on their West campus and 2) the Asheville Airport for a future co-located fire station at the airport with AVL Department of Public Safety.
- The Committee then discussed the conversations with the Asheville Airport being mutually beneficial. Assistant City Manager Jeff Richardson commented that there are significant limitations to the property, so there would likely be one larger facility to house both AFD and the Airport Authority; there may be savings given the economies of scale.

Public Comment

- Rob Sebrell, owner of a local skateboard shop, commented that the current skateboard ordinance is outdated. He then stated that with the nuisance court, kids using skateboards as a form of transportation are now being targeted.
 - The Committee then discussed the current enforcement methods, then asked staff to provide a bullet summary of what can or can't be done and reasons behind it to guide discussion at the following meeting.
- Councilmember Bothwell then commented on the recent stories regarding his involvement in matters related to civil liberties, specifically that his intent is to affirm what the APD is already doing and communicate it to the community.
- The Committee then briefly discussed the topic of pedestrian safety. Given the absence of the presenting Councilmember, the Committee did not take action on this agenda item.

Next Meeting

- The committee by consensus agreed to begin meeting on a quarterly basis, unless pressing issues arise. The next meeting will be Tuesday, July 20, 2010, 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building 4th floor training room.

Meeting Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.